

How Not To Celebrate Your Birthday

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Summary: Astrid and the other youths from the academy decide to give Hiccup a surprise for his 18th birthday. Unfortunately, it doesn't turn out like they intended. With a new threat looming over Berk, Hiccup and the dragon riders must put an end to it...before time runs out.

1. Chapter 1

Hiccup hadn't expected Astrid to be shaking him awake.

"What?" he asked, sitting up and then standing up. "What are you doing here?"

"Kidnapping you," said Astrid as if it were obvious.

"You're kidnapping me?" asked Hiccup.

"Yep," said Astrid. "Are you coming or not?"

"Well, maybe, but it might help if I actually knew what I was coming for," said Hiccup, grabbing his shield from where it leaned up against the wall before strapping it around his back. "Care to explain?"

"Ahh, no," said Astrid. "Come on. The others are waiting for us at the cove."

"My Dad's not going to like me going out this time of night," said Hiccup. "Maybe I could tell him-"

"I've already cleared it with him earlier yesterday afternoon," said Astrid.

"You cleared it with him to allow you to kidnap me?" he asked.

She punched him on the shoulder.

"OW!" he yelled in protest. "What _is _it with you and the punching?"

She punched him again. "THAT'S for asking!" she said.

"Aaaaand this is why I always have a constant bruise on my shoulder," said Hiccup, a hint of sarcasm in his voice. "Seriously though, Astrid, I think you have some explaining to do before we go-where are we going? This is all really really-borderline awkward."

"Like I said, the others are waiting for us at the cove," said Astrid.

"It's not exactly what you _said, _it's what you _haven't _said," said Hiccup.

"Come on," she said, grabbing his arm and pulling him towards the window.

"Why not take the front door?" asked Hiccup.

"Because that's too easy," said Astrid. "I'm kidnapping you, remember?"

"Aaaand the awkwardness continues," said Hiccup. "Toothless isn't going to be too happy about this, either."

"Cleared it with him as well," said Astrid. "He's at the cove waiting with the other dragons and riders."

"This is why you and I have trust issues," said Hiccup. "You never explain anything."

She grabbed his arm tighter before jumping out the window, Hiccup in tow. They landed in thick bush, muffling their fall.

"That could have gone _far _worse," said Astrid.

"It could have gone a lot better, too," said Hiccup, standing up from where they fell. "Remind me again why we didn't use the front door?"

Astrid grabbed his arm again and began pulling him away from the village.

"You gonna explain now?" asked Hiccup.

"Probably not," said Astrid.

"Astrid; so predictable," he mumbled. "Did you bring any means of transportation? A good kidnapper always has some way to escape quickly."

"Yeah, and I've got mine," said Astrid. She whistled, loudly. Her Deadly Nadder, Stormfly, flew down and landed in front of her and Hiccup.

Astrid jumped on her back and Hiccup jumped on behind her. Stormfly

took off, heading towards the cove.

"Who else is involved in my 'kidnapping'?" asked Hiccup.

"All the kids from the Academy, along with all the dragons," said Astrid. "Including me. I was step one to the plan. My job was to nab you in your sleep."

"Great," said Hiccup sarcastically. "Target; Dragon Boy in his sleep. Couldn't you have at least waited until morning?"

"It's not as fun if it's in broad daylight," said Astrid.

"Remember, Astrid, I'm going to be Chief someday, and I'll remember this," he said, a mix between a threat and a joke.

"Doesn't make a difference right now," said Astrid.

"I also have the shield," said Hiccup.

"Okay, _that _makes a difference right now!" shouted Astrid. "You are a victim. You are not supposed to be armed!"

"You were the one who let me grab it," said Hiccup.

"You _always _grab it," said Astrid. "I just overlooked it."

"Do you even know what time it is?" asked Hiccup.

"Probably around midnight."

"Perfect. You struck at midnight because it was more _dra-ma-tic."

—

"Exactly. Plus the full moon makes it especially creepy."

"Be even more creepy if your transportation was a Boneknapper."

"Or a Skrill."

"Could you do that?"

"Sounds hard."

"How about a Scauldron?"

"What about a Whispering Death?"

"You know that would never work. Whispering Deaths plunge into the ground as soon as anything bright hits them."

"Good point. Timberjack."

"Oooh, spooky."

"How about a Red Dea—"

"Don't," Hiccup interrupted. "You _know _I hate talking about it."

"Sorry," said Astrid. "Sometimes you have to wonder, though. What if there _was _another one of them out there?"

"Thank you, Astrid, for that image because I _clearly _haven't had enough bad experiences with the Red Death before and now need to worry that there is another one lurking away somewhere."

"I'm just wondering."

"Please, stop talking about it now, alright? You're supposed to be kidnapping me, remember? Can we just leave it at that?"

"Right."

Stormfly continued to the cove. Neither Astrid nor Hiccup found anything worth saying, so they kept quiet most of the flight. Hiccup just couldn't stop thinking, though. _Another _Red Death? Was that even _possible? _He hoped not.

"Sorry," said Hiccup. "I mean-you know how it is. It was scary."

"I know," said Astrid. "I'm sorry, too. Oh, look, the cove!" she said it enthusiastically, trying to change the subject. "Stormfly, down!"

Stormfly flew down and landed in the cove. Fishlegs, Ruffnut, Tuffnut and Snotlout were standing, their dragons by their sides. As soon as Hiccup dismounted, Toothless ran over and attacked Hiccup with a series of happy grunts and licks.

"Tooth_less!_" Hiccup groaned. "That is dis_gusting!_"

"We are treacherous kidnappers who do, uh, treachery, while-kidnapping, uh-you," said Tuffnut. "UGH! Can someone else explain this? I'm awful."

"Let me try," said Ruffnut, shoving Tuffnut to the side and approaching Hiccup. "We are here to-to-what are we here for again?" she asked, turning to Astrid, who was currently facepalming.

"Remember?" asked Astrid. "The _plan_"

"Oh, right-what was the plan again?" asked Tuffnut.

"You guys don't _ever _pay attention, do you?" asked Fishlegs.

"Not unless there's fire involved," said Tuffnut. "And even then it's like a maybe."

"Am I the only one who's confused?" asked Hiccup.

"No," said Tuffnut. "I'm lost in a sea of-water. AHHG! I can't even do a metaphor right!"

"I didn't think you knew what that was," said Ruffnut.
>"Who said I knew did?"<p>

"Well that fact that you used it properly in a sense tells us that

you are capable of the definition," said Hiccup.

"I-don't know what that means," said Tuffnut.

"Yeah, me neither," said Ruffnut.

"Guys, back to the kidnapping!" shouted Astrid.

"Right," said Snotlout. "Is this the part where we take him?"

"You've already _done _that," said Hiccup.

"No, we mean-to the _secret hiding place,_" said Tuffnut, making his voice sound as suspicious as possible.

"Okay, can someone please tell me what's going on?" asked Hiccup.

"Where does an explanation fit into this expedition?"

"Should we tell him?" asked Fishlegs.

"What if we just knock him out and pretend nothing happened?" asked Tuffnut.

"That could work," said Ruffnut.

"Uhh, _guys_, I'm _right here_, " said Hiccup.

"We wanted to get an early start," said Astrid.

"On the _kidnapping?" _asked Hiccup.

"No, Dragon Boy," said Astrid. "Happy birthday."

"Happy-_what_?" asked Hiccup.

"Yeah, happy birthday," said Astrid. "That's why we brought you wanted to have, y'know-the whole day just to spend."

"But my birthday isn't until tomorrow," said Hiccup.

"We _know _that, Hiccup," said Snotlout, "but if I am correct you were born on the one day where it only comes every few years."

"Right," said Hiccup. "February twenty ninth; the extra day in a Leap year."

"Yep, trust the weirdest boy to be born on the weirdest day," said Snotlout.

"I'll take that as a compliment," said Hiccup.

"Mmm hmm," said Astrid. "Normally we celebrate your birthday March first, but kidnapping you then wouldn't have been fun, because you would have been _expecting _it."

"But this time," said Tuffnut, "we did it-" he paused for dramatic effect, "-_secretly._"

"Well, I don't know if I should be appreciated, or a little-creeped out," said Hiccup.

"I think it's a little bit of both if you ask me," said Snotlout.

"So, how old are you now?" asked Astrid. "Eighteen?"

"I don't know," said Hiccup. "There's only been five leap years since I was born, so wouldn't I technically be five?" He joked.

"Yeah yeah, five," said Astrid, punching him on the shoulder. "So..." she mused, "what should we do to start out with?"

"I don't know," said Hiccup. "I thought you had it planned out."

"Actually, we never thought we would get this far," said Snotlout. "We only planned up to the time when we kidnapped you. After that it's all a little hazy."

"Oookay," said Hiccup. "Um...any ideas, because I am open for suggestions?"

"We could have a quick race," said Ruffnut. "A quick, treacherous, dangerous-_dragon race." _

"Yeah!" shouted Tuffnut. He and his sister banged their heads together like they did while in triumph.

"I don't have a better idea," said Hiccup. "Shall we?"

"Why not?" said Astrid, jumping on Stormfly. The rest of them mounted their dragons and stood in an orderless line.

"Ready?" asked Hiccup.

"GO!" yelled Ruffnut and Tuffnut in unison. Their dragon shot into the sky.

"Wait-_what!?" _shouted Hiccup. He looked up, watching the twins and their Zippleback slowly zoom into the air. "I guess the race has started!"

The remaining dragons and their riders shot into the cloudless, midnight sky.

"First one to land on the outskirts of Changewing island wins!" shouted Snotlout.

They blasted off equally fast, their dragons struggling to win.

Ruffnut and Tuffnut were easily outrun by the other dragons and their riders, mainly because they kept fighting about which direction they were going in.

"Left!" shouted Tuffnut.

"No right!" shouted Ruffnut. "No wait-left!"

"Okay, right!" yelled Tuffnut. Their Zippleback spun in and out of control while Snotlout and Astrid took the lead.

"Hookfang, annihilate!" shouted Snotlout. The Monstrous Nightmare lit himself on fire, breathing flames towards Astrid and her Nadder. Stormfly steered out of the way just before the fire singed her.

"Fine," said Astrid. "If that's how it's gonna be, then let the games begin. Stormfly, spine shot!" she shouted commands to her dragon. Stormfly flicked her tail, sending spines flying towards Hookfang and Snotlout.

"HEY!" shouted Snotlout as soon as Hookfang dodged each of the spines.

"It was her idea," Astrid gestured to her dragon. "But I approved!" she added with a smug grin before blasting ahead of Snotlout.

Ruffnut and Tuffnut managed to catch up with Snotlout and Hookfang.

"Barf, Belch, light!" they shouted in unison to their dragons. The dragons obeyed the command, firing at Snotlout. Hookfang managed to dodge most of the blast, but still was angry.

"Hookfang, light! Wing blast!" shouted Snotlout. Hookfang lit on fire, breathed a bunch of it into the air, and then spread his wings before flapping them, blasting the fire towards the twins.

"AWESOME!" shouted Tuffnut. "THIS IS AWESOME AND SCARY!"

The fire singed the ends of their hair and smeared their faces almost completely black.

"Whoa, we almost died," said Ruffnut.

"I know," said Tuffnut. "Go again!?"

"YEAH!" shouted Ruffnut, banging her head up against her brother's.

Astrid was way ahead of Snotlout, Ruffnut, Tuffnut, and Fishlegs, who was in the very back since he had the slowest dragon. The only person Astrid didn't recall passing was Hiccup and Toothless.

That's when she heard the screech of a certain Night Fury. Before she saw where it was coming from, a plasma blast exploded in front of her. Stormfly screeched, spiking random spines everywhere.

Hiccup and Toothless flew ahead of Astrid.

"Hey!" shouted Astrid as she fought to catch up to them. "What was THAT for!?"

"I have no idea what you're talking about!" said Hiccup, smiling as Toothless sped ahead. Astrid humphed before leaning over Stormfly's

head. Hiccup was the only person she didn't mind losing to for two reasons. 1) he didn't rub it in, and 2) he didn't keep going on and on and on about it. If there were a third reason, it would be 3) that way Snotlout didn't win. When Snotlout won, he just wouldn't stop talking about how much better he was.

In truth, it was impossible for any other dragon to win a race against a Night Fury. The problem was, Hiccup didn't care about winning, thereby letting others get ahead of him and allowing them to win without him telling them he did. He did that during Thawfest; he threw the race when he had it in the bag. He _let _Snotlout continue being Thawfest champion. She wished for once he would win, but she told him before he didn't care if he won or lost.

Although he did like at least a little competition with no pressure, no prize, and no fighting.

He sped ahead with Astrid right beside him. Toothless wasn't at top speed yet, and already Astrid's Nadder was having a problem keeping up. Astrid looked behind her to see Snotlout and the twins gaining.

Hiccup looked behind and followed her eyes.

"Changewing island, they said?" he asked her.

"Yeah," said Astrid.

"Could they have chosen anything different?" asked Hiccup. "I mean, we haven't really had very good experiences with the Changewings."

"Yeah," said Astrid. "Maybe we should restart the race?"

"Snotlout would never do that," said Hiccup. "Neither would Ruffnut, or Tuffnut, for that matter. We should probably stay with them, y'know, just in case?"

"Yeah, we probably should," Astrid agreed. "So...do you have anything planned for today?"

"Not really," said Hiccup. "I was thinking about a few things, though. There has been some volcanic activity I've been noticing on an island while flying with Toothless. I was thinking maybe we could check it out sometime, maybe."

"Which island?" asked Astrid.

"_THE _island," said Hiccup. "Merciless."

Astrid suppressed a shudder. She knew what _THAT _island was, and also how much Hiccup hated it. But he often let curiosity take its toll on him. Curiosity killed the viking, she remembered the old saying, but didn't mention it.

"Are you sure you want to go-_there?" _asked Astrid.

Hiccup shook his head. "No, I'm not sure," he said. "But-it's for exploration. Maybe-we could go sometime-maybe later?"

Astrid nodded. He looked uncertain, and even thinking about Merciless made her skin crawl, especially when he mentioned ever returning there. She was still terrified of the place, even after nearly two years.

"Changewing island," said Hiccup as said island came into view. "Come on, bud, let's finish this."

Toothless blasted off quickly, leaving Astrid and her Nadder far behind. Toothless flew towards the outskirts to the island and landed, kicking sand up as he did. The rest of the riders filed in.

Stormfly landed second, Snotlout coming in third. Ruffnut and Tuffnut came in and landed their dragon.

"Yeah, I win!" shouted Ruffnut.

"No, I got here first!" shouted Tuffnut.

"Guys, _same dragon_," said Hiccup, slightly irritated that he kept having to remind them of the fact every other day. Fishlegs filed in last, only because he was the most careful, and also had the slowest dragon.

"Nice race, guys," said Hiccup. "Now, let's get off this island before the Changewings notice we're here."

No one argued. Changewings weren't to be messed with by a long shot, so they took to the air at once, spun over Changewing island to make sure they weren't being followed, and then headed back to Berk.

"What do we do now?" asked Astrid. "It's still kinda dark-we probably have a few more hours until sun rise."

"What do you suggest, milady?" asked Hiccup, grinning as Toothless flew beside Stormfly.

"We could-go to Breakneck Bog?" Astrid offered.

"Normally I would say yes, but last time we went to Breakneck Bog we were attacked by Smothering Smoke Breath dragons who steal metal," said Hiccup. "And Toothless and I wear a lot more metal than the rest of us."

Astrid nodded, unbeknownst to herself looking at Toothless' prosthetic tail and Hiccup's metal leg. She shook herself out of her thoughtful stare, looking ahead as if something very interesting just flew ahead of her.

Sooner than later, Berk was in view. It was still pitch black, but gaining light from the full moon that lit the night sky.

"Snowball fight?" asked Astrid as she and the other riders landed in the plaza, directly in front of the forge.

"That would be fun," Hiccup agreed, "except I'm still getting used to my prosthetic, and snowball fights are a hazard. An occupational hazard, when you don't have both your feet."

"Then we won't do it on the ground," said Snotlout, jumping off Hookfang and running into the forge. He came out with six empty bags, throwing one to each dragon rider and keeping one for himself. "We'll do it in the air." He filled his bag up with snow and mounted Hookfang. "Well? Coming or not?" he asked.

"This is a great idea!" shouted Astrid, leaning over Stormfly to scoop snow into her bag. "We'll do it over Raven Point. There's tons of snow there! See you then!" Stormfly and Hookfang took to the air, towards Raven Point.

Hiccup shook his head while smiling and laughing a little bit. "This is going to be hilarious."

2. Chapter 2

Snowball fights are one thing. Snowball fights on dragons? Now that's a different thing all together.

Hiccup, Fishlegs, Ruffnut and Tuffnut arrived at Raven Point two minutes after Astrid and Snotlout got there. They were still mounted on their dragons, feeling it a waste of time to dismount.

"So," said Hiccup, "how does this work?"

"Snowball to the _death_," Snotlout suggested.

"Ah, no," said Hiccup. "Any rules?"

"Don't die," said Astrid. "That's good enough, isn't it?"

"It kinda goes without saying, actually," said Hiccup.

"So, we take to the sky, and then we fight," said Astrid. "No landing unless you're refilling your bag. You guys re-" Before she finished, she felt something freezing cold hit her face. The snowball shattered on impact, sending ice and snow flying all over her.

"Okay, who threw that snowball?" she asked.

Tuffnut started to whistle, throwing another snowball carelessly at Hiccup. He put up his shield just before it hit him, so it hit the shield instead.

"The first shots have been fired!" shouted Astrid.

"THEN IT'S WAR!" Hiccup joined in.

Instantly, it broke out. Hard, icy snowballs poured as the dragon riders threw them at each other on the backs of their dragons. Whenever they ran out of snow in their bags, they would zoom down, stick it close to the ground, and fill it with snow again.

At first, they each took a certain amount of time to create the perfect snowball. But then it turned into fistfulls of snow being thrown, just because making the snow into balls was a waste of time. Then it got a little crazy...

Hiccup filled his entire bag with snow before flying directly over Snotlout. Turning it upside down, he covered his cousin in snow.

Snotlout jumped at the sudden burst of icy freeze that engulfed him. He looked up to see Hiccup laughing.

And then Hiccup felt the same freezing cold sensation Snotlout felt. Astrid's Nadder was hovering over him, Astrid shaking the remains of her bag onto Hiccup and Toothless.

"WHAT!?" shouted Hiccup. "Who's side are you on!?"

"MINE!" shouted Astrid.

Hiccup smiled smugly before patting Toothless. Toothless flew directly over Stormfly and then flipped over, allowing all the snow that covered him and his rider to now cover Stormfly and her rider.

"WHAT!?" shouted Astrid.

"Dragon's idea," said Hiccup. He grabbed some snow off a nearby tree and threw it at Astrid.

"You gonna blame that one on the dragon too, Hiccup!?" yelled Astrid.

"Yep," said Hiccup.

Hiccup looked down to see Snotlout coming at him, a bag overflowing with icy snow.

"AAAGGGHHH" he screamed angrily.

"Dat da da, we're dead," said Hiccup.

"HICCUP HORRENDOUS HADDOCK THE THIRD, YOU ARE SO DEAD!" yelled Snotlout.

"Oooh, saying the full name makes it offic-", said Hiccup, but before he could finish, Snotlout hit him in the face with a snowball, followed by the bag of snow being dumped over his head.

"Gang up on me, great," he said sarcastically.

"We are your kidnappers," said Tuffnut. "Wait...are we kidnapping you, or are you kidnapping us?"

"Should we tell them?" asked Hiccup.

"Probably not," replied Astrid. "They never listen anyways."

Toothless swooped down, allowing Hiccup to stick the bag out to the side and fill it with snow before flying back up. Hiccup grabbed a snowball and threw it at Fishlegs. Fishlegs grunted and threw one back, smacking Hiccup's shoulder.

It only got crazier from there.

Hiccup grabbed a snowball, rounded it perfectly, and then pulled the trigger on his shield that turned it into the slingshot. He loaded the snowball, pulled back, aimed at Tuffnut, and fired.

It hit him square on in the back. He looked at Ruffnut.

"WHAT WAS THAT FOR!?" yelled Tuffnut.

"I didn't do anything," said Ruffnut.

Hiccup loaded another snowball in his slingshot and fired at Ruffnut. It hit her, and she growled at Tuffnut.

She grabbed her while bag, full of snow, and dumped it over his head.

"Hey no fair!" shouted Tuffnut. He grabbed his bag and dumped it over her head.

It continued like this for hours upon hours upon hours. At length, the snowballs ceased fire. The youths panted from the fight, smiles beaming on their faces.

"That was AWESOME!" shouted Snotlout. He looked at Hiccup. "Why did I ever used to make fun of you?"

Hiccup shrugged and smiled at his cousin. "So...should we head back to the village?" he asked. The sun was up now. It couldn't have been later than eight in the morning, but also couldn't have been earlier than six.

"I don't know," said Astrid. "I thought you wanted to go to Merciless."

His facial expressions changed instantly. Astrid mentally smacked herself for yet again bringing it up, but Hiccup smiled reassuringly at her.

"Yeah, we could do that," he offered, stuttering slightly like he normally did when he was uncertain about something. "And then we'll head back to the village."

Dragons turned and flew off towards Merciless. Although normally on a journey such as this, they would have been chattering away happily. Especially Snotlout. But it was dead silence, broke only by the flapping of the dragons' wings, and the occasional bickering of Ruffnut and Tuffnut.

Astrid flicked some of the remaining snow out of her hair, brushing her hands through her bangs. The dragons continued to fly, until they saw...it.

Merciless in all its merciless, dark, gloomy, creepy glory. It had only been around two years since the battle, and the memory remained fresh in the minds of the dragons and riders.

"Ugh, I hate this place," said Tuffnut. "Did we _have _to come _here?" _

He looked to the riders for a reply, but they didn't offer one, too worried that something was going to jump out and attack them.

Toothless growled as he and the other dragons flew over the island. Looking around carefully and sniffing the air, the dragons landed silently near the shore. The shore wasn't made up of sand; it was made up of black, dark, sandy-feeling pebbles. The air around the island was dark, like you could literally _taste _and _feel _and _sense _the darkness that engulfed the island's frame.

Hiccup was the first to dismount, being the leader of their Academy, he was the first one to take the risk. After him came Astrid, Snotlout, Ruffnut, Tuffnut, and Fishlegs in that order. The dragons remained directly beside their riders, ready to nab them should a danger arise.

"This is insanely creepy," said Snotlout. "It's like-"

Astrid elbowed him before he could finish. It was already creepy enough _without _talking about it. She feared talking about it would make it worse than it already was.

"Well, we've made it this far," said Hiccup. "Let's see what we can find about this island."

First time in two years they even saw Merciless, and now Hiccup was offering an expedition. She couldn't blame him; she herself would have also suggested one if Hiccup hadn't. But the other part of herself remembered the day they all thought Hiccup had been killed in the epic battle against the Red Death.

The mountain (or what was left of it) was glowing slightly red; the only light at all on the island. Hiccup and the others slowly approached the opening to it, which was a gaping hole that the Red Death formed during the attack.

"Dragons, everyone," said Hiccup. They didn't need to be told twice. Instantly, they were mounted on their dragons, Hiccup and Astrid in front with the others behind them.

"Should we really find out what's in there?" asked Astrid. "It could be nothing..."

"Right," said Hiccup, "but you know as well as I do we won't be able to sleep at night if we don't find out what's in here."

"Nothing, can we go now?" asked Fishlegs. Out of their entire group, Fishlegs was the first one to offer a backdown.

"Nope," said Hiccup. "Slowly, Toothless."

Toothless walked inside the opening, followed by Astrid, Snotlout and the twins. Fishlegs waited for a few moments before reluctantly following them inside.

"Wow," Hiccup breathed. "It's so much different than the last time we were here. It's just-empty. Deserted."

The dragons continued their trek until they came to the main area of

the once dragon nest. It was almost filled to the top with rubble and stones, most likely from cave-ins.

But there was one thing that stuck out to Hiccup, among all of the other stones.

"Toothless, give us some light," said Hiccup. Toothless obeyed, breathing in before letting out a single plasma blast that hit a different rock, lighting the entire abandoned dragon nest.

Hiccup slowly dismounted Toothless before walking over to the mysterious rock. Astrid jumped off her dragon and followed his lead. The rest, too terrified to move, much less dismount, remained safely on their dragons.

The rock they were investigating was huge; maybe as big as the Great Hall back on Berk. It was colored strange as well, a brownish tan with a slight hint of gold around the top and bottom of the rock.

"It looks like a..." Hiccup started, pausing slightly as realization dawned on him. "...dragon egg."

He touched it lightly, only to withdraw seconds later when the egg became hot to the touch. "And..." he continued, "...it's about to explode!" He yelled suddenly. "Everyone! Fall back!" he shouted, jumping on Toothless. "We have to get out of here before it hatches!"

Astrid mounted Stormfly, but just when they were about to fly out, the egg exploded in a blinding light. Screaming, Astrid watched as rocks began to fall vigorously from the ceiling. A cave-in.

And then everything went dark.

3. Chapter 3

****WOW WOW WOW WOW WOW WOW WOW! I AM SO EXCITED! This is my first EVER fanfic, and in just one day of having it up, I've already got followers, favorites, and reviews! (or, one, so far, but who cares!?). When I saw someone started following me, I nearly screamed! And then one turned into two, and then two to three, and four-and WOW! I never expected this! So, I plan to be updating at least once a day (sometimes twice, depending on how the writing's going, or maybe every other day, because of school and busy schedules), and there will be a sequel, since this is only going to be around six chapters long. THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU to all who read and review! FREE VIRTUAL COOKIES TO EVERYONE! Enjoy chapter 3! ****

****Astrid's POV****

It was black. Everything was black. Completely dark. Astrid was slowly brought back into conscious with a start, realizing she couldn't even see the front of her hand when she held it up to her face. The second most terrifying thing was that it was silent besides her own heavy breathing and occasional cough as she breathed the dusty air.

She felt over herself quickly, seeing if anything was broken. She was

_sure _her left arm was at least _fractured_, if not worse. Luckily she was right handed that way if someone attacked her she could still fight...she couldn't say the same for a left hander.

Thinking of left-handers immediately got her thinking about the only left-hander she knew: Hiccup.

"Hiccup?" she called out, struggling to get to her feet. "Snotlout? Ruffnut? Tuffnut? Fishlegs!? Stormfly!? Barf!? Belch?! Hookfang!? TOOTHLESS!? MEATLUNG!?" Her shouts became more erratic as panic set in. "HICCUP!" she shouted blindly into the dark. "ANYONE!"

She fell to the ground again, her breath uneven and shaky. What happened? Where were the others? She remembered an explosion, and then a cave-in, and then, terrifyingly-_nothing_. _

She released a sigh of relief when she heard a faint voice call her name. It sounded very...hopeful. Desperate. Yet questioning at the same time."Astrid?"

"Hiccup?" she asked, trying to move blindly towards the voice.

"Y-yeah," said Hiccup, stuttering. She still couldn't see him, but knowing he was alive was enough for her at that point. To know that she wasn't alone in the dark cavern. "Wh-where-wh-what?"

"Where are you?" asked Astrid, standing up, searching frantically for Hiccup.

"I-I d-don't kn-ow," said Hiccup. "W-here are y-ou? M-More importantly wh-ere are w-we?"

"Still on Merciless," said Astrid. "Can you move?"

"I-I don't know," said Hiccup. The fact that he didn't know really said a lot to Astrid. She was already beginning to panic; she didn't need anything else.

"Keep talking. I can't see anything," she told him.

"O-kay," said Hiccup. "I can't see an-ything e-either."

"Start conversation," said Astrid. "The only way I can find you is if you keep talking."

"Okay," he said. "Do-do you c-come h-here of-often?"

"This isn't funny, Hiccup," said Astrid.

"I wasn't t-trying to be f-funny," said Hiccup. "We're on Mer-Merciless. How-how could _anyone _b-be f-funny?"

"The twins could do it," said Astrid.

"-but _Snotlout _c-could _definitely _give you a run for your money-"

"You're voice is getting louder," said Astrid. "Keep going."

"I-it's scary," said Hiccup. "Like-like the time we w-were ba-battling the Re-Red Death. S-same pl-place, t-too. How-how ironic?"

"Still not funny," said Astrid.

"Still n-not trying to be," Hiccup retorted.

"Hang on," said Astrid. She reached out blindly and grabbed something.

"OWW!" screamed Hiccup. "D-do you _have _t-to gr-grab me l-like that!?"

"HICCUP!" she yelled, throwing her arms around him, although she couldn't see him.

"Y-yeah, no need to y-yell, A-Astrid, I'm still h-here," said Hiccup, wrapping one of his own arms around her.

She felt like he had been thousands of miles away from him the whole time she had been searching for him. It was an awful feeling, and now finally hugging him after thinking he had died (for the utmost time) made all of it disappear.

"Are y-you okay?" Hiccup asked her.

"Am _I _okay?" asked Astrid. "I'm not the one who can barely talk without stuttering."

"T-that's n-normal for m-me, As-trid," said Hiccup.

"Not this kind of stuttering," said Astrid. "Are _you _okay?"

"I don't know," he said. Astrid could tell he was trying to keep his stuttering at bay, but still, it _was _a habit for him. "E-everything seems-distant. L-like it's being pl-played out t-through h-honey."

"I meant how do you _feel?_" asked Astrid.

"L-like I've been m-mauled o-ver b-by a T-Terrible Terror and p-poisoned at the s-same time," he answered.

Astrid turned so she was sitting beside him, their sides pressed against each other. "Well, I guess I won't punch you this time," said Astrid.

"T-thanks," said Hiccup.

"What do we do now?" asked Astrid.

"T-try to find the o-others," said Hiccup.

"Right," said Astrid. "I called out to them. I think we're alone here."

"W-where are the dr-dragons?"

"I don't know."

"D-do you know h-how to s-start a f-fire?"

"I would, but it's pitch black in here."

"C-could you t-try? It w-would be ea-easier to f-find a way o-out if w-we could s-see our s-surroundings."

"Sure," she said, but she was reluctant to leave his side. What if she couldn't find him again? Then again, if she got a fire started, it would be easier for both of them. She slowly stood up, still wobbly from the cave-in, although she managed to feel around and find a few sticks.

"I've only done this a handful of times," she said.

"J-just do what w-we work-ed on a-at the Aca-demy," said Hiccup.

She wanted to argue that they had dragons then, but decided against it. Where were the dragons? Was it possible that they and the other riders were crush-no. She couldn't think about that. Not now. Not when everything was already terrible as it was.

Finding two rocks, she clapped them together a few times.

"I forgot-how hard-this is-without-our dragons," said Astrid flatly, clicking the stones up against each other every few words.

Hiccup half-laughed. "Y-yeah," he said. "No dragons c-change a lot of t-things. I j-just hope t-the others a-are alright."

Astrid didn't reply, but her mind was racing. What if they weren't alright? What if they had been hurt with more than just a fractured or broken arm? She still didn't know how Hiccup was injured, or badly she was herself. Her arm screamed in pain as she finally managed to create a small fire.

Dropping the stones to the side, she picked up and stick and poked the small fire she had started, trying to get the flames to rise. She did, and the firelight soon lit up the cavern they were trapped in.

After she was sure the fire was strong enough, she looked at her arm. It was already turning a light shade of blue. That could mean one of two things: 1) she bruised it, 2) she broke it. She tried moving it again; the pain told her it was more than just a bruise.

Now that she could see, she moved back over to Hiccup. Now, she could really make sure he was alright. He was leaning his entire body weight up against the wall, his eyes closed. There was a large cut across his forehead, but other than that, he looked pretty much unhurt.

"Hiccup?" she asked, shaking him.

"What?" he asked, blinking his eyes open. "O-oh. You g-got the f-fire going. T-that's a st-art. Now we can-"

He suddenly looked at Astrid's arm.

"You b-broke it?" he asked.

"No," she said, although it was a lie, they both knew it.

"Uh-huh," said Hiccup. "Sure. And I-I have b-both my feet."

She almost punched him, but she didn't. Instead, she moved over and sat next to him again, looking out at their surroundings. The fire she made was only three feet away from her and him, casting light, but not their shadows. It looked like they were in a cave, only where the mouth of the cave would have been there was a pile of rubble and rocks, sealing the only exit.

"Cave-in," said Astrid.

Hiccup didn't respond. He continued to stare at the sealed exit.

"W-were the o-others...? Do you think that m-maybe...?" he asked, needing not to continue. Astrid knew what he was wondering.

"No," she said. "They're fine," but she said it like she was asking a question. Were they fine? She didn't know.

"T-thanks," said Hiccup.

"For what?" asked Astrid.

"F-for kidnapping m-me," said Hiccup. "B-besides t-this part, this h-has been on-ne of the b-best days of m-my life."

"Just wish I could make it better and finally _get out _of here," said Astrid.

"Yeah, m-me too," he said.

"How are we going to get out?" asked Astrid.

"I-I don't kn-ow," said Hiccup, a hint of guilt in his voice. Hearing it, Astrid mentally slapped herself.

_Of course he doesn't know, _she said in her mind. _Stop making him feel useless. _

"W-we can't t-tunnel out," said Hiccup. "Y-you have a b-broken arm."

"And you probably got some sort of concussion," said Astrid.

He nodded. "Something l-like that," he said. "I d-don't really think there's much w-we _can _do."

"What are you suggesting?" asked Astrid.

"W-we wait," said Hiccup.

Silence. Absolute silence besides the fire crackling and their heavy breathing. Just wait? Wasn't there anything else they could do?

"I-I don't kn-ow if th-is is really o-our big-gest problem," said

Hiccup.

_Thank you, Hiccup, as if this isn't bad enough, _Astrid wanted to say, but didn't for his sake.

"The e-explosion," he said. "Th-at was an _egg _h-atting. Y-you know what d-dragon eggs d-do when t-they hatch."

"They explode," said Astrid.

Hiccup nodded. "S-so," said Hiccup, "th-that can only mean th-at there's a dr-dragon somewhere ar-around here, maybe b-buried in the rubble, or m-may-be on the o-ther side o-of it. That's not a p-problem, either," he continued. "The problem is, d-did you s-see the _size _o-of that _t-thing!? _I-I mean, wh-what kind of dr-agon can l-lay an egg t-that huge?"

Astrid didn't talk. She only gasped. She knew where he was getting...the problem was where he was getting was terrible.

"I-it was the egg of a S-Seadragonus Ginantigus M-Maximus," said Hiccup. "M-more c-ommonly known a-as the R-Red Death."

"Another Red Dea-" she started, her voice trailing off.
"But-how?"

"The first R-Red Death must h-have laid an e-egg before T-Toothless and I k-killed it," said Hiccup. "M-maybe it took l-longer to ha-hatch because of its v-vast size. Three years, A-Astrid. That's h-how long it's been, y-you know."

"Yeah, I do know," said Astrid, "but are you saying there's _another _one?"

"U-unfortionatly," said Hiccup, "y-yes."

Astrid stood suddenly. "Come on," she said. "We have to try to get out of here, at least."

Hiccup made a move to stand. Astrid grabbed his arm and pulled him up, but instantly he cried out in pain.

"Oww!" he shouted.

Astrid stopped suddenly, holding him up by the shoulders. "What!?" she asked, not meaning to yell, although she did.

"I-I think I might have a b-broken leg," he said, leaning up against her.

"Which one?" asked Astrid.

"The o-only one," said Hiccup.

Great. A broken leg. Just when she thought it couldn't get any worse. She eased him back down slowly.

"Could it get any worse!?" shouted Astrid.

"At least I-I didn't _l-lose _another one," said Hiccup,

smiling.

She almost resisted he urge to punch him.

Almost.

Almost.

Not quite.

"Okay," she said after lightly punching his shoulder. "You wait here, I'll see what I could do."

"WHAT!?" he yelled. "I want to-"

"No, you can't," said Astrid.

"Y-you have a b-broken arm," said Hiccup. "For me it's just my l-leg."

He made a point, she knew, in a way. She knew she shouldn't be trying to dig out with a broken arm, just like he shouldn't be trying to walk with a broken leg. But she also knew that they _had _to get out. They just _had to. _

He was right, though. Groaning angrily, she sank back to the ground beside him.

"So, I guess we wait?" she said.

"W-we have to," said Hiccup. "W-what other c-choice do we really h-have?"

****Normal POV ****

Darkness. It was official. The number one most dark place any of them had ever seen. Fishlegs came to first, followed by Ruffnut, Tuffnut, Snotlout, and then the dragons.

Toothless shook himself out of his daze and noticed something was out of place. Hiccup was gone. In a frenzy, the dragon ran around the dark, screeching and roaring, looking for his rider.

"Is everyone okay?" asked Fishlegs.

"Yeah, can't say the same for Toothless," said Tuffnut. "What is his problem?"

Toothless ran over, snarled at Tuffnut, and then continued searching. Where was his human? He couldn't have just been _gone, _it made no sense. Actually, now that he thought about it, it made _perfect _sense.

"Snotlout? Tuffnut? Ruffnut? Astrid? Hiccup?" Fishlegs called out, getting replies from everyone but the last two. "Hiccup? Astrid?" Fishlegs called out again. No answer. "Meatlung, can you give us some light?" he asked his Gronckle. The dragon nodded, although Fishlegs couldn't see it, and shot a fireball into the center of the area.

Everyone moved in closer to the fire besides Toothless and Stormfly, who were looking desperately for their riders.

"Is everyone okay?" asked Fishlegs.

"Yeah," said Snotlout. "Where's Astrid? And Hiccup?"

"I don't know," said Fishlegs.

Instantly, as soon as he brought himself to do it, Fishlegs looked around. To the left there was a wall, and to the right was a large wall made up of fallen stones and rocks from the cave-in.

"You don't think that Hiccup and Astrid could be in-that, do you!?" shouted Snotlout.

Toothless and Stormfly turned to the pile of debris and started digging. Instinctively, the other dragons and riders joined in.

Toothless knew they were behind it. He just knew it. He was a Night Fury. He could smell them, and hear their breathing. They were alive-but both of them needed help.

He could hear them speak through the stones. It was faint, but he could still hear it:

"_You b-broke it?" _

"_No." _

"_Uh-huh. Sure. And I-I have b-both my feet." _

"_Cave-in." _

"_W-where are the o-others...? Do you think that m-maybe...?"_

"_No, they're fine." _

"_T-thanks." _

"_For what?" _

"_F-for kidnapping m-me. B-besides t-this part, this h-has been on-ne of the b-best days of m-my life."_

"_Just wish I could make it better and finally get out of here."

_

"_Yeah, m-me too." _

"_How are we going to get out?" _

"_I-I don't kn-ow. W-we can't t-tunnel out. Y-you have a b-broken arm." _

Why was he stuttering like that? What was wrong with him? He dug faster, desperate to get to his human. What was wrong with him?

_

Suddenly, one of his paws brushed against something slick feeling. Toothless stopped for the moment before tentatively touching it again. This time, whatever-it-was moved.

He roared suddenly and jarred back. The rest of the dragons and riders did the same seeing Toothless' sudden antics. Fishlegs moved over to the spot where Toothless was digging, and then gasped.

"It looks like a...dragon," said Fishlegs, stepping away.

"Duh, it's a dragon!" shouted Snotlout. "I knew that before you even said it!"

"Then why didn't you say anything?" asked Fishlegs.

"Because-uh-I'm much too smart for that!" replied Snotlout.

"Riiight," said Fishlegs. "We'll have to find some way to dig around it. We have to make sure Astrid and Hiccup are alright. If they hadn't been able to move out of the way before the cave-in-"

Silence followed Fishlegs' sentence. What if they really _hadn't _made it out in time?

"Uh...why don't we just get the dragons to blast it?" asked Ruffnut.

"YEAH!" shouted Tuffnut. "I say we smash it, then blast it...!"

"Then SMASH IT AGAIN!" shouted Tuffnut and Ruffnut at the same time, banging their heads together.

"Guys, this is _SERIOUS!" _shouted Snotlout. "So be serious!"

"We _are _serious!" shouted Tuffnut.

"Blasting would just cause the already unsteady roof to cave in even more," said Fishlegs. "And plus there is a sleeping-or unconscious-dragon under this debris, and I think we all know what kind of dragon it is."

"We do?" asked Tuffnut, earning a punch from Snotlout.

"Obviously it's a Seadragonus Giganticus Maximus!" shouted Snotlout.

Everyone stared at him.

"Were you actually listening the day we talked about it?" asked Fishlegs.

Snotlout looked offended. "What?" he shouted. "No, I didn't listen to you while you were explaining at the Academy, Fishlegs, I simply caught on, since you and Hiccup talked about it every so often!"

"Okay," said Fishlegs. "We need to get through the rubble, but there's a newly hatched Seadragonus Giganticus Maximus and-"

"We're dead!" shouted Tuffnut. "We're dead we're dead we're dead!"

"KNOCK IT OFF, WOULD YOU!?" shouted Snotlout. "Let's try digging to the right of the dragon."

Toothless and the other dragons began to dig with the riders not far behind. They continued to dig and push their way through, trying to get past the wall of rock and dirt.

Ruffnut and Tuffnut were the least help: they kept complaining about how they should just blast it instead.

Toothless dug faster as they made a hole through the wall. At length, it became easier to move the stones. Then, all at once, a hole appeared where they were digging. Toothless bolted through as fast as he could, roaring at what he saw.

4. Chapter 4

****Astrid's POV/Normal POV ****

Astrid sat beside Hiccup, watching the fire glow. He had fallen asleep (or unconscious; she didn't really know) just a few seconds ago. She continued to muse on how she and he would get out, until she saw something move.

Standing up slowly, she headed towards the stone wall to her left. Then it became clear to her that someone-or something-was making its way through the wall.

She instinctively drew her axe and held it, swaying at her right side, since her left arm was far beyond the use of fighting. She saw the stones slowly begin to give way, and something bolted into it, knocking Astrid over.

She screamed; something very un-Astrid like, and lifted her axe-something _very _Astrid like-but stopped when she realized what was pinning her down. Moreover, _who _was pinning her down.

"Toothless?" she asked.

Toothless was on top of her, teeth bared and snarling, but as soon as he realized it to be Astrid, he retracted his teeth and began licking her. Laughing, she shoved him away.

Toothless suddenly averted his gaze to his rider. In one swoop of his wings, he landed at Hiccup's side, where he nudged his face, trying to get him up.

Astrid was just about to follow Toothless over, when she was pounced by her own dragon, Stormfly.

"Hey, girl!" she yelled. "You don't know how happy I am to see you!"

'Astrid!" shouted Fishlegs. "You're alright!"

"Yeah, I'm alright!" shouted Astrid. "And so are you!" She hadn't ever been happier to see Snotlout, Ruffnut and Tuffnut then that moment.

"Where's Hic-" Fishlegs was interrupted when Toothless cooed happily. Looking over, they saw Hiccup and Toothless, Toothless curled around Hiccup, and Hiccup gently stroking his dragon's head.

"Hiccup!" shouted Fishlegs as he and the others raced over. He offered them each a smile, relieved that they were alright.

"Hey, guys!" he said. "You're are okay!"

"Yeah!" shouted Snotlout. "I wasn't worried, or anything-"

"Sure you weren't," said Hiccup, rolling his eyes. Although Snotlout would never admit it, he cared about Hiccup, and Hiccup knew it.

Stones began to fall from the ceiling again, causing everyone to fall silent. After the stones ceased falling, Astrid spoke up. "We should get going. That does not sound like friendly rocks."

"And there's something you need to know..." Fishlegs started.

"What?" asked Hiccup as he pulled himself onto Toothless, seeing as though his right leg was far beyond the use of standing, let alone walking.

"That dragon that hatched?" said Fishlegs. "It's um...buried, in the pile of rubble, either sleeping or knocked out. We saw it while trying to get to you guys."

"Was it breathing?" asked Astrid. If it was dead, nothing to worry about. If it was alive, however...

"Unfortunately, yes," said Fishlegs.

"Great," said Hiccup. "Another Red Death."

"Actually, it looked more blue than red," said Ruffnut.

"BLUE Death!" shouted Tuffnut.

"No one shout," said Hiccup. "We don't know how conscious that thing is. Fishlegs, did you see any way out?"

"No," said Fishlegs. "There was one on the opposite side, but digging out would risk the Blue Death waking up, since it's already halfway dug out from that side."

"We'll have to do it from this side," said Hiccup.

"THIS side?" asked Fishlegs. "How!?"

"We probably only have a few minutes before the roof caves in on us," said Hiccup, "so we'll have to move as quickly as possible."

"What are you planning?" asked Astrid.

"Three years ago," said Hiccup, "they were able to break the wall open with catapults. If we each get our dragons to fire at the walls--"

"We might be able to break through enough to escape!" Astrid finished excitedly. "You. Are. A. Guinness!"

"Don't call me that yet," said Hiccup. "The roof is going to start crumbling as soon as we start firing. Meaning, we have to go as fast as we can, and then get out without getting hit by the stones."

"Seems simple enough," said Astrid.

"Famous last words, Astrid," said Fishlegs. "Famous. Last. Words."

"Hey, the first time I tried the Mangler, it worked!" shouted Hiccup. "Why won't this plan work?"

"First of all," said Fishlegs, "the Mangler is a bola-shooting cross-bow like contraption. And if you didn't succeed on your first time, there was always another time. This is a once in a lifetime chance. We either live or we die."

"Yes," said Hiccup. "And hopefully we don't die, because that would really hurt. Ready?" He asked the other riders as they mounted their dragons. "Set-" he held his hand up to give the signal, "FIRE!" He shouted. "Now, Toothless! Plasma blast!"

"Stormfly! Fireblast!" shouted Astrid.

"Okay, girl, lavablast!" shouted Fishlegs.

"Barf! Belch! Light!" shouted Ruffnut and Tuffnut in unison.

"HOOKFANG, ANNIHILATE!" yelled Snotlout.

At once, the dragons all blasted everything they had at the wall, aiming for the same spot in the center each time. Rocks fell from the roof, which the dragon's dodged while continuing to fire.

At length, just as the roof began to cave-in erratically, they broke through the wall. Before Hiccup could give the command, the dragons ran, jumped, and flew out of the cave, turning around to watch it crumble behind them.

"YEAH!" shouted Hiccup. He was glad now he broke his right leg, because he used the left one to control Toothless' tail fin, and if he couldn't control the tail fin, he wouldn't have been able to be flying like he was now. "THAT WAS AMAZING!"

They all looked back down suddenly. Then, a bloodcurdling roar broke the sounds of the remainders of the roof falling. Then, a dragon emerged from the forming dust, two sets of eyes, three in each set, one set on either side of its head.

"NO LONGER AMAZING!" shouted Hiccup.

The Blue Death was much more antagonizing when the dust died down around it. It was as big as its egg was, which was huge. They didn't call these things _Giganticus Maximises _for nothing.

It roared at the dragons in the sky before spreading its greyish-blueish wings and flying towards them.

"Scatter! It can't follow all of us!" shouted Hiccup.

They all scattered off into different directions. The Blue Death looked to each of them, and decided to follow Stormfly.

Astrid glanced behind her. Seeing she was the one to be chased, she urged her dragon on further.

"Come on, Stormfly!" she shouted. The Nadder tried to get away from it, but it wasn't working very well. The Blue Death breathed fire towards Astrid and her dragon. Stormfly jarred out of the way just in time to miss it.

"Astrid!" shouted Hiccup.

"Hiccup! No! Stay back!" shouted Astrid. Like he would listen. He steered Toothless over towards her. Toothless breathed in, and then shot out a plasma blast at the monstrous dragon.

The Blue Death turned in his direction. Toothless continued to fire more plasma blasts at it, hitting in random spots around its vast body.

The twins and Snotlout joined in soon enough, following Hiccup and Toothless' lead. Fishlegs and Astrid joined in seconds later.

The Blue Death was roaring like mad, breathing fire randomly at each of the dragons and their riders.

"Ruffnut, Tuffnut, give us a fire line!" shouted Hiccup.

"Thought you'd never ask!" exclaimed Ruffnut. Her head of the Zippleback breathed the flammable gas. The other head sparked it, lighting it up in a large blast.

Using the smoke from the inferno as a cover, the dragons flew higher into the clouds until they were sure the Blue Death couldn't see them.

"What do we do now?" asked Astrid. "If that thing's really a Seadragonus Giganticus Maximus, which it is, we can't leave it here-alive."

"Astrid's right," said Fishlegs. "Seadragonuses are like the queens of their nests. They can also send out a homing signal to control some of the smaller species of dragon, such as Gronckles, Nadders, Terrible Terrors, Nightmares, Zipplebacks-I honestly don't know about the Night Fury."

"I don't know either," said Hiccup. "Could it hurt to find out? You guys stay here-if it does have a 'homing signal' and Night Furies are

the only dragons who aren't affected by it, it means I'm the only one who can really go."

"What are you-HICCUP!" Astrid shouted when he steered Toothless down back towards the Blue Death.

"I'll be fine!" he yelled back just before disappearing below.

"Stormfly! Go!" shouted Astrid. Stormfly simply roared unhappily and ignored her rider. "STORMFLY!" exclaimed Astrid, about two times louder than the first time. "GO! SPINESHOT! FIGHT!" She shouted random commands, just to see if her dragon would listen to any of them.

"Why won't she go!?" yelled Astrid.

"Hookfang! Go!" yelled Snotlout. He got the same reaction from Hookfang that Astrid got from Stormfly. "He won't budge!"

"Neither will Meatlung!" shouted Fishlegs.

"I think ours is broken," said Tuffnut.

The Blue Death roared, loudly. The other dragons roared right back, shaking miserable.

"The Blue Death," said Fishlegs, "it's doing something to them."

"WELL THAT'S JUST GREAT!" shouted Astrid. "I can't even see what's going on down there! We don't know what's going on with Hiccup or Toothless, either!"

_He'll be fine, _said Astrid in her mind. _He said he would._

_Yeah, _said a sarcastic reply, _because last time he said that was during a lightning storm when he was struck by lightning nearly ten seconds after assuring you he would be fine. _

_Shut up, _she said to her sarcastic self.

"Astrid!" said Snotlout. "Hiccup will be fine! He can't die, I mean-he's _Hiccup._"

For some reason that wasn't very reassuring. The last time they were on this dreaded island, the last time Hiccup had fought a Seadragonus Giganticus Maximus, he had lost his leg for it. She couldn't help but wonder what this battle would cost him-and there wasn't anything she could do about it.

She heard a plasma blast from Toothless, followed by many roars and more plasma blasts. She heard louder blasts coming from the Blue Death, and then smaller ones from Toothless.

Then she heard a massive explosion. She couldn't see anything; Stormfly was accidently making sure of that, but it didn't sound good.

"HICCUP!" she shouted without thinking.

5. Chapter 5

****HELLO!** This is the second to last chapter in this particular fanfiction. There **WILL** be a sequel, however, titled "How Not To Lead Your Armada." As soon as I finish this one, I'll start working on and posting chapters to the sequel. Thank you to all who read, favorite, follow, and review! Have a virtual cookie! Enjoy the chapter! Second to last one in the fic and I am **EXCITED!****

****Hiccup's POV****

"I'll be fine!" he shouted as Toothless blared downwards.

_Famous last words, Hiccup, _said a part of his mind.
Famous...Last...Words.

_Thank you, for summing that up, _he told it back.

The Blue Death was roaring still, breathing fire.

"Do these things even have a shot limit?" asked Hiccup to Toothless, not expecting an answer. "Seriously? Do they even go a day where they don't go all fire crazy?"

Toothless roared and let out a plasma blast towards the Death. He wasn't as big as the Red Death, but he was big to Toothless and his rider. The Blue Death looked at them both as Toothless flew over him, roaring and screeching his Night Fury call.

"Come on!" shouted Hiccup to the Blue Death. "Is that all you've got!?"

The Blue Death roared and breathed fire towards Toothless.

"Watch your tail, bud!" shouted Hiccup. "Don't want a dejavu, do we?"

Toothless roared back.

"Yeah, and I'll watch my leg," said Hiccup. "Let's go get 'em, Toothless!"

Toothless roared in agreement before shooting down suddenly, towards the Blue Death. The dragons roared at each other before firing what defense they used.

The Blue Death was unamused. He (or she-Hiccup didn't know yet) swatted at the dragon like he was a pesky fly. And of course, like pesky flies, they don't go away until you make them. Or kill them...whichever comes first.

The Blue Death was so much like the Red Death it was scary. Hiccup shook himself out of his thoughts.

_Live now, think about similarities later, _he told himself. _Don't die. Don't let Toothless die, don't lose another leg... _

Toothless fired another plasma blast at the Death. Amidst the

explosions, Hiccup could hear the voices of his friends, shouting to their dragons. But the dragons either were too scared to listen, or too terrified to care. Either way, they didn't budge, apparently.

The Blue Death breathed in a bunch of the flammable gas, and then shot a single fireball at Toothless and Hiccup. Toothless turned around and fired a plasma blast directly at the fireball. They collided, and for a split second, nothing happened. But the next split second, it exploded into an array of red and purple.

The Blue Death roared amidst the explosion. Hiccup looked over just in time to see the Blue Death turn and fly off in a different direction. As soon as it disappeared from sight, Hiccup landed Toothless on Merciless.

"Woo," Hiccup breathed. "Let's _not_ _do_ that again, okay, bud?"

Toothless grunted in agreement. Hiccup looked up to see the other dragons and their riders flying towards them, finally landing on the shore beside Hiccup and the Night Fury.

"Hiccup!" shouted Astrid. "Where's-"

"It flew off," he said, not paying attention to Astrid's question, and just randomly saying so. "I don't know where."

"Well, the important thing is that it's gone!" shouted Fishlegs.

"Aww man," said Tuffnut. "And I didn't even get a burn!"

Hiccup laughed half-way before turning back to Astrid. She was still mounted on their dragons, as were they all, but her arm wasn't looking good. It was now a darkish shade of purple and blue. He imagined his leg probably didn't look any different.

"Come on," said Hiccup. "We should probably get back to Berk and have your arm looked at, Astrid."

"Oh, right," said Astrid. "But first-" She jumped off her dragon and ran over to Hiccup. She balled her fist, and punched him on the shoulder-hard.

"OWW!" yelled Hiccup. "What was that for!?"

"Scaring me," said Astrid. "Again."

She pulled him into a hug. "And this is for not dying, again," she said. "Yeah, we should go now. And also have them look at your leg, too."

He nodded slightly as Astrid ran back over to Stormfly and mounted her. "Okay, let's move out," he said. He and the others took to the air, everyone staring ahead, besides Hiccup. He looked behind them, knowing that they hadn't seen the last of the Blue Death.

****Astrid's POV****

Astrid walked through the village, looking for Hiccup. They had arrived back on Berk only a few hours before. The sun was setting nicely behind the mountains, but Hiccup was no where to be found.

Her arm was tightly wrapped and in a sling around her shoulder, holding it in place. She had only just finished at the healer's, right after Hiccup went in before her. She knew his break was worse than hers, thereby he went first; but now didn't seem to be anywhere.

She found him at the beach, throwing stones into the ocean. He was sitting beside Toothless, leaning up against the jet black dragon. His right leg was bandaged heavily, she noticed as she made her way towards him, Stormfly following her.

"Hey," said Astrid.

"Hey," replied Hiccup, throwing another stone into the sea.

Astrid moved over and sat beside him, leaning herself up against Toothless. She looked out into the horizon; man, it was beautiful.

"Sorry if today didn't turn out like you planned," said Astrid.

"Plan?" asked Hiccup, his arm in mid-throw of another rock when he paused to look at her. "What plan? You know, Astrid, I normally don't plan my day, because it never goes as I planned." He proceeded to throw said rock into the ocean.

"I know," said Astrid. "I mean-you broke your leg. Happy birthday!" She said with fake excitement. "Yay," she added, putting on a fake smile, emphasizing the word before frowning again.

Hiccup only laughed. "You know, Astrid," he said, "today hasn't been what I've planned, honestly-but can you really plan your birthday when you've got Astrid, Ruffnut, Tuffnut, Fishlegs, and Snotlout living on the same island as you?"

"Is that a compliment or an insult?" she asked.

"I think it's a little bit of both, if you ask me," said Hiccup. "Maybe ninety nine percent compliment, one percent insult."

Astrid nodded. "Oh," she said as if remembering something important she had forgotten, "I was meaning to give you something..." She looked over to Stormfly and whistled to her. The dragon sauntered over, allowing Astrid to pull something out of the saddlebag.

"Thanks, girl," Astrid patted her Nadder's head, giving her leave to go. She handed the object to Hiccup. He took it gently as though it would shatter, and looked at it intently.

It was a sand dollar, attached to a chain that would go around your

neck. The sand dollar itself was beautiful; white with golden rings along the edges. The opposite side was tinted with even more gold.

"It's-" said Hiccup.

"I know, awful," said Astrid.

"I was going to say amazing," said Hiccup.

Astrid turned to him suddenly.

"Seriously, Astrid," said Hiccup. "I've looked for sand dollars on Berk before but-I've never found one once. How did you manage it?"

"Who said we found it on Berk?" asked Astrid.

"Who's we?" asked Hiccup.

"Stormfly and me," said Astrid.

"Okkkay...where'd you find it?" asked Hiccup.

"Breakneck Bog," said Astrid. "I know, it was dangerous, but I had to get you _something _for your birthday-"

"It's awesome," said Hiccup. "Thank you, Astrid."

"You're welcome," said Astrid. "It's good, too, because sand dollars are said to give you good luck. In legends, anyway."

"Well, I guess I need all the good luck I can get," said Hiccup. He put the necklace around his neck before turning back to the setting sun.

"What is it you're not telling me?" asked Astrid.

"Nothing, I'm just thinking," said Hiccup. "We got the Blue Death off Merciless but-it's still _out there." _

"You're right," said Astrid as if the thought had just occurred to her. "What are we going to do?"

"We're going to wait," said Hiccup. "Wait and see if it makes the first move."

"And what if it does?" asked Astrid.

"Then we're going to make the second move," said Hiccup. "Let's just hope it's the _right _move."

****Meanwhile... (Normal POV) ****

The Blue Death flew over the ocean. He wasn't used to being beaten...especially by a simple boy and his dragon. He was going to get revenge...he just _had _to.

The Blue Death flew until another island came into sight. It looked utterly deserted and untasteful.

_This will work nicely, _the dragon thought to himself, but not before something shot out of the sky and wrapped around its wings. It was still a hatchling; not too confident in flight yet. When its wings were wrapped around each other, it roared as it plummeted down towards the island.

The Blue Death crash landed on it, smashing a few buildings on impact. At once, people were throwing ropes and chains around the dragon, keeping him down. And they were able to do it, strange enough (remember, he was still just a hatchling. Had he been full grown, they never would have been able to hold it down).

A man walked forward, eying the dragon greedily as tons of people fought to keep it on the ground.

"This," said the man, "is perfect."

He turned back to the rest of the village. "Men!" he shouted. "Build a confinement that will keep this dragon at bay. Do everything in your power to keep it here. Do NOT let it escape."

He drew his sword and looked at his reflection before sheathing it again. "THIS," he said to himself, "is the perfect plan. A dragon as big as a building, stronger than any dragon before it-" he paused to laugh. "Yes," he said again, speaking out loud. "Yes. This is the most fiendish plan I have ever made. Now I only need someone to train it, for me." He smiled devilishly. "And I know just the person." He laughed maniacally. "It's so Deranged of me!"

**TO BE CONTINUED . . .**

**The sequel will be titled "How Not To Lead Your Armada". I am pretty certain that the sequel will have a sequel, too, I just don't know what to call it yet. Any ideas, comments, criticisms, or suggestions? I am throwing it wide open to the group. THANK YOU, VIRTUAL COOKIES AND ICE CREAM, ALONG WITH THE PIE OF YOUR CHOICE! The Sequel should start being posted either today or tomorrow (probably today, because I AM SO EXCITED!). Have fun! **

End
file.